

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
OMB-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 /086 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6492
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION SINAI
USCINCEUR

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USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PFOR, IS
SUBJECT: FOREIGN POLICY KEY ISSUE AS COALITION TALKS RESUME

BEGIN SUMMARY: WHAT ARE PERCEIVED AS GROWING DIFFERENCES
IN U.S.-ISRAELI VIEWS OVER A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT HAVE
GIVEN RISE TO A GENERAL FEELING OF CONCERN . MANY SEE
INEVITABLE CONFRONTATION. IN AN "ANONYMOUS" INTERVIEW, ALLON
PLACED PART OF THE BLAME ON BEGIN. MEANWHILE, FOREIGN POLICY
IS THE MAJOR ISSUE IN THE RENEWED LIKUD-DMC TALKS. ALTHOUGH
BEGIN HAS OFFERED YADIN THE DEPUTY PREMIERSHIP THE DMC PREFERS
TO TACKE THE CONFLICTING FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS OF THE
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TWO PARTIES BEFORE DISCUSSING ALLOTMENT OF PORTFOLIOS. END SUMMARY

1. SINCE THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS, THE MIDDLE
EAST FOCUS HAS SHIFTED DRAMATICALLY FROM INTER-ARAB DIFFERENCES TO
U.S.-ISRAELI DIFFERENCES. THE COINCIDENCES OF A
WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATION DETERMINED TO ADDRESS
FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE

COMING TO POWER IN ISRAEL OF A NEW LEADERSHIP WHOSE VIEWS APPEAR IRRECONCILABLE WITH ARAB VIEWS MAY WELL RESULT IN THE SEVEREST STRAIN IN U.S.-ISRAELI TIES IN YEARS. ALREADY THERE HAVE BEEN STRIDENT REACTIONS TO REITERATED PRESIDENTIAL CALLS FOR A PALESTINIAN HOMELAND, AND WITHIN THE LAST WEEK TO CARTER'S MENTION OF COMPENSATION FOR PALESTINIAN REFUGEES. THE ISRAELI CABINET HAS GONE ON RECORD WITH ITS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE EFFECTS ON THE ARAB STATES OF AMERICAN STATEMENTS--WHETHER OR NOT THESE CONSTITUTE "PLAN." PRIVATELY, OFFICIALS AND COMMENTATORS HAVE SPOKEN OF AMERICAN SOFTENING ON THE "PALESTINIAN" AND "BORDER" ISSUES, AND EVEN ON "THE NATURE OF PEACE."

2. IN THE INTERIM PERIOD BETWEEN THE ELECTIONS AND THE FORMATION OF A NEW ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, THERE IS AGROWING FEELING HERE THAT A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES MAY BE INEVITABLE, AND THAT IF IT COMES, ISRAEL WILL HAVE TO FIGHT ON LESS THAN OPTIMAL TERMS. A REFLECTION OF THE UNEASY FEELING AMONG MANY ISRAELIS THAT THE LIKUD VICTORY AND ESPECIALLY BEGIN'S HARDLINE PRONOUNCEMENTS MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE SHARPENING OF U.S.-ISRAELI DIFFERENCES IS A RECENT ("ANONYMOUS") CRITICISM BY FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON OF BEGIN'S POST-ELECTION RHETORIC. THIS "BOMBASTIC ZIONISM," ACCORDING TO ALLON, HAD "IMMEASURABLY DAMAGE" ISRAEL ABROAD AND HAD ALSO UNDERCUT THE LIKUD LEADER'S PROSPECTS OF SUCCESS IN IMPLEMENTING HIS FOREIGN POLICY. (HE SAID THAT THE "CONSTRUCTIVE ZIONISM" OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALLON PLAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAD ENABLED THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT TO MEET FOREIGN CRITICS HALFWAY WITH AN OFFER OF TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE.)

3. ANOTHER VIEW IS THAT THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION HAS LOOSED A FLURRY OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS SINCE THE ISRAELI ELECTION IN ORDER TO PREPARE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, IN PARTICULAR AMERICAN JEWRY, FOR TOUGHER MEASURES AGAINST ISRAEL. THE AMERICANS, ACCORDING TO THIS LINE OF THINKING (HEARD PRIMARILY FROM LIKUD APOLOGISTS), ARE USING BEGIN'S ELECTION VICTORY AS A PRETEXT TO DO WHAT THEY HAD WANTED TO DO ANYWAY, I.E., IMPOSE A SETTLEMENT ON ISRAEL AND THE ARABS.

4. ON ANOTHER STAGE, FOREIGN POLICY ENTERS SIGNIFICANTLY INTO THE LIKUD-DMC COALITION TALKS WHICH RESUMED JUNE 2. BROKEN OFF LAST WEEK BY THE DRAMATIC

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O R 041042Z JUN 77
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ANNOUNCEMENT OF BEGIN'S INTENTION TO APPOINT DAYAN
FOREIGN MINISTER, THE PACE OF THE RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS WILL
LIKELY BE SLOW. THE BARGAINING IS EXPECTED TO BE
TOUGH AND LIKUD'S HOPES FOR EARLY SUCCESS SEEM TO HAVE
FADED.

5. THE ODDS REMAIN SOMEWHAT BETTER THEN EVEN THAT
THE DMC WILL JOIN A LIKUD-LED COALITION. THE PRESSURE
FROM AMONG THE DMC RANK AND FILE (AS WELL AS AMONG
THE GENERAL PUBLIC) IS RUNNING HEAVILY FOR JOINING
DESPITE THE STRONG RESERVATIONS OF SEVERAL INFLUENTIAL
LEADERS LIKE AMNON RUBENSTEIN. HOWEVER YADIN'S PARTY
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DOES NOT SEEM TO BE IN ANY HURRY. IT WILL PROBABLY
DRAG OUT THE TALKS UNTIL AFTER THE JUNE 21 HISTADRUT

ELECTION AND NOT FALL IN WITH A LIKUD TIMETABLE THAT IDEALLY WOULD WANT A GOVERNMENT VIRTUALLY ALL SOWN UP BY THE TIME THE KNESSET OPENS ON JUNE 13.

6. THIS DMC STRATEGY IS UNRUFFLED BY THE RISK THAT THE LIKUD MIGHT COME UP WITH A THIN MAJORITY COALITION WITHOUT THE DMC. THE LATTER FEELS THAT THE WEDLOCME MAT WILL STILL BE OUT FOR IT EVEN AFTER A GOVERNMENT IS INVESTED.

7. FOREIGN POLICY IS THE REAL BONE OF CONTENTION BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES. IT IS IRONIC THAT THIS SUBJECT, RELAGATED IN THE DMC ELECTION CAMPAIGN TO A POSITION SUBORDINATE TO DOMESTIC REFORM, SHOULD NOW DETERMINE WHETHER THE DMC JOINS THE COALITION. AS FAR AS THE DMC IS CONCERNED, FOREIGN POLICY WAS REALLY THE PROBLEM IN BEGIN'S SELECTION OF DAYAN. IT WAS NOT THE HURT PRIDE DERIVED FROM THE LIKUD'S CLUMSY HANDLING OF THE AFFAIR, IRRITATING AS IT WAS TO THE DMC'S SENSIBILITIES, NOR EVEN THAT THE DMC HAD ITS OWN DESIGNS ON THAT PORTFOLIO. THE NAMING OF DAYAN WAS PARTICULARLY APPALLING TO THE DMC BECAUSE AS A STRONG PERSONALITY HE IS SEEN AS COMPLETING THE DOMINATION OF A CABINET BY LEADERS WITH NEARLY IDENTICAL HARDLINE VIEWS ON THE WEST BANK. THE DMC THUS SAW ITSELF EFFECTIVELY WITHOUT A VOICE IN FOREIGN POLICY-MAKING.

8. APPARENTLY, LITTLE PROGRESS WAS MADE IN THE JUNE 2, MEETING, THE FIRST SINCE THE DMC'S DECISION TO RESUME TALKS. BEGIN OFFERED YADIN THE POST OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND A SEAT IN WHAT HE ENVISAGED TO BE AN "INNER CABINET." YADIN REPORTEDLY FAILED TO REACT TO THEOFFER. THE DMC WAS MORE INTERESTED IN FINDING A FORMULA THAT WOULD PERMIT IT TO ENTER A COALITION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DESPITE THE CONFLICTING FOREIGN POLICY POSITIONS OF THE TWO PARTIES IT WAS IN DISCUSSING PORTFOLIOS. DIFFERENCES REMAIN ON THE READINESS FOR A TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE ON THE WEST BANK AND THE LOCATION OF FUTURE SETTLEMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. BEGIN HAD COME OUT ON JUNE 1 WITH A LIST OF 15 POINTS AS A GUIDELINE FOR FUTURE GOVERNMENT POLICY(SEPTEL). IT WAS A REHASH OF THE LIKUD PLATFORM. APPARENTLY THEY WERE NOT DISCUSSED DIRECTLY BY THE TWO NEGOTIATING TEAMS.

8. MEANWHILE THE ABILITY OF THE LIKUD TO FORM A COALITION EVEN WITHOUT THE DMC, THOUGH GENERALLY CONCEDED, COULD ALSO FACE DIFFICULTIES. THERE HAVE BEEN NO FORMAL

TALKS YET BETWEEN THE LIKUD AND THE AGUDAH PARTIES
BUT PROBLEMS ARE FORESEEN IN SEVERAL AGUDAH POSITIONS.
THE MOST TROUBLESOME WILL BE THEIR DEMAND FOR THE
CESSATION OF FEMALE CONSCRIPTION, A CONCESSION THAT
THE LIKUD IS UNLIKELY TO GRANT. A POSSIBLE COMPROMISE,
MENTIONED BY SEVERAL OBSERVERS, IS AN AGREEMENT BY THE
AGUDAH PARTIES TO SUPPORT THE COALITION IN VOTES OF
CONFIDENCE ALTHOUGH REMAINING OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT.
IN SUCH A SITUATION, AND WITHOUT THE DMC, THE LIKUD
WOULD BE RULING WITH A MINORITY GOVERNMENT. IT COULD
FIND ITSELF PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE IN FOREIGN POLICY
SPHERES WHERE A SOLID OPPOSITION COULD BE EXPECTED
TO ARISE WITH THE FIRST MOVES TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
LIKUD'S HARDLINE VIEWS.
LEWIS

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